

Black Bindweed

Polygonum convolvulus L.

Alternate Names

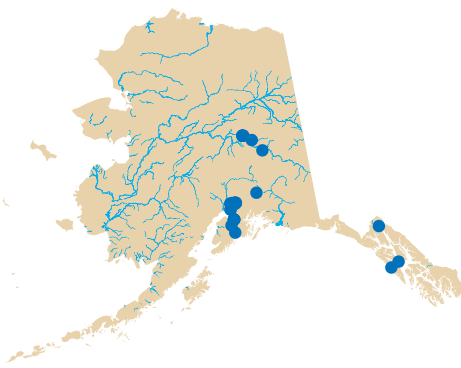
wild buckwheat, corn bindweed, ivy bindweed, climbing bindweed, knot bindweed, bearbind, corn-bind, black knotweed, climbing buckwheat, dullseed corn-bind.

Synonyms

Fallopia convolvulus (L.) A. Love,
Fagopyrum convolvulus (L.) H.
 Gross, *Tiniaria convolvulus* (L.)
 Webb. & Moq., *Bilderdykia*
convolvulus (L.) Dumort

Description

Black bindweed is an herbaceous annual climbing plant with a thin, spindle-formed, deep root, and it is often profusely branched. The stem is slender and 2–100 inches long with long internodes. Leaves are alternate, $\frac{3}{4}$ –2½ inches long, long-petioled, elongate-ovate, pointed, and heart or arrow-shaped. Flowers are small, up to $\frac{3}{16}$ of an inch in diameter, and grouped in short axillary clusters of 2–6 flowers or in terminal interrupted or spike-like racemes. The fruit is a triangular achene, $\frac{1}{8}$ – $\frac{3}{16}$ of an inch long, minutely pitted, brownish-black, and dull, with an obtuse base and pointed top.



XID Services photo by Richard Old



XID Services photo by Richard Old

Similar Species

Superficially resembling field bindweed (*Convolvulus arvensis* L., included in this book), black bindweed can be distinguished by its annual habit, pointed leaves, papery leaf sheaths, and small green flowers. Field bindweed has white to lavender, large, showy, and trumpet-shaped flowers.

Management

Tillage has limited success for controlling black bindweed because of the large seed bank created by this species (Holm et al. 1991). Hand-pulling provides effective control if supplemented by follow-up monitoring and retreatment. A number of selective herbicides sprayed alone or in mixtures have been used to control black bindweed (Anderson et al. 1986, Fain 1986). One biological control method involves the use of allelopathic chemicals from another weed species to depress germination and seedling growth. In Argentina, a fungus causes sufficient damage to black bindweed to warrant investigation as a biological control agent (Dal-Bello and Carranza 1995).

Notes

Black bindweed is listed as a restricted noxious weed in Alaska (Alaska Administrative Code 1987). Its genus name, *Polygonum*, is derived from the Greek words *polys*, “many,” and *gonu*, “knee or joint,” hence “many joints” describes the thickened joints on the stem. The species name, *convolvulus*, comes from the Latin word *convolvere*, which means “to twine around.”



KULAK photo by Paul Busselen